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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/26/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [BO](#) [EU](#) [SI](#)
SUBJECT: SLOVENIA TO WAIT AND SEE ON BELARUS

REF: SECSTATE 30007

Classified By: CDA Maryruth Coleman for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

Presidency Statement?

[11](#). (C) On March 25, ADCM met with COEST Chair Darja Bavdaz Kuret to stress the importance of U.S.-EU unity in dealing with Belarus (reftel), highlighting that a public statement would be very helpful as a follow-on to the French demarche made in Minsk last week. Bavdaz Kuret said that the French Ambassador, on behalf of the EU, had expressed concern and solidarity with the U.S. in the meeting with Belarusian FM Martynov last week; she had also urged the unconditional release of Kozulin.

[12](#). (C) Bavdaz Kurat did not commit to issuing an EU Presidency statement. She explained that they were watching how Belarus reacts to the demonstrations expected today when the Russian Prime Minister visits Minsk. If the GOB used force, she stated that the EU would issue a statement. ADCM urged a statement in solidarity with the U.S. no matter what. Bavdaz Kuret took our concerns on board and noted that they would have a round of talks with the Commission and secretariat to prep for a possible statement tomorrow.

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Extending Sanctions?

[13](#). (C) Bavdaz Kuret also said that the EU would discuss sanctions on March 31, in preparation for an April 7 decision. She commented that the EU would prolong sanctions for another six months unless the GOB released Kozulin. If the GOB released Kozulin before April 7, the EU would most likely reduce the number of people on the visa ban list. ADCM urged the EU to keep Lukashenko on the list, but Bavdaz Kuret said she could not anticipate what the EU might decide. If the GOB released Kozulin after April 7, the EU might hold another assessment before the six month extension period was up.
COLEMAN